

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 AID-01 NSC-06 SS-07 /028 W
-----039281 030020Z /75

R 011951Z DEC 77
FM USINT HAVANA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 634

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD EAGR OREP CU
SUBJ:CODEL KELLY WRAP-UP

1. CONGRESSMAN RICHARD KELLY (R-FLA) VISITED CUBA FROM NOVEMBER 25-30 ACCOMPANIED BY SOME 20 CONSTITUENTS ENGAGED IN CITRUS AND SUGAR PRODUCTION. KELLY, WAS RECEIVED FOR FOUR HOURS (THREE WITH ACCOMPANYING GROUP AND PRESS) BY FIDEL CASTRO. HE ALSO HELD TALKS WITH MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE MARCELO FERNANDEZ FONT AND WAS HOSTED FOR DINNER BY MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE RAFAEL FRANCIA MESTRE. KELLY TOLD USINT CHIEF THAT VISIT TO CUBA WAS ARRANGED ON HIS OWN, AND NOT ON CUBAN, INITIATIVE. KELLY WAS SATISFIED WITH CUBAN TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR VISIT, PLEASED WITH HIGH-LEVEL ASSURANCES HE RECEIVED ON ALLEGED CUBAN INTENTION NOT TO ENTER U.S. CITRUS MARKET, BUT CONVINCED THAT NO BASIC CHANGES IN CUBAN POLITICAL POSTURE CAN BE EXPECTED AND U.S. SHOULD NOT MOVE FORWARD TO NORMALIZE US-CUBAN RELATIONS OR TO EASE CUBAN TRADE EMBARGO.

2. FIDEL CASTRO, THOUGH PLEASANT AND CORDIAL THROUGHOUT, PROVIDED NO HINT TO KELLY THAT THERE WOULD BE QUICK MOVEMENT ON ANY US-CUBAN CONTENTIOUS ISSUES. ON POLITICAL PRISONERS, CASTRO JOCARLY SAID THAT EVERY VISITOR ASKS FOR THEIR RELEASE AND THAT MADE HIM (CASTRO) WISH HE HAD THREE HUNDRED U.S. POLITICAL PRISONERS. ON AFRICA, CASTRO

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REPEATED FAMILIAR LINE THAT CUBA IS DEFENDING FRIENDS AND THAT, AS INDEPENDENT COUNTRY, CUBA WOULD DO AS IT PLEASES IN AFRICA. (KELLY REMARKED THAT, IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION, CASTRO WAS LESS RIGID ON AFRICA THAN IN HIS STATEMENTS TO FULL GROUP.) CASTRO ALSO CLAIMED THAT SIZE OF CUBAN ARMED FORCES NOW IS ONLY ONE THIRD OF MILITARY STRENGTH MAINTAINED BY CUBA IN EARLY 1960'S. ON POSSIBILITY OF

FUTURE FAMILY VISITS, CASTRO REPEATED HIS JAMAICA COMMENTS THAT THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT IN CONTEXT OF NORMALIZATION. KELLY FOUND NO DISPOSITION ON PART OF CASTRO TO LOOSEN SOVIET CONNECTION, THOUGH CASTRO DID DENY, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, THAT HE WAS "INSTRUMENT OF SOVIET UNION."

3. ON ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, CASTRO, FERNANDEZ FONT, AND FRANCIA MESTRE ALL REPEATED ASSURANCES THAT CUBA IS NOT INTERESTED IN EXPORTING CITRUS TO US, SINCE FULL CROP IS ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED TO USSR/EE UNTIL 1990 AND BEYOND. (CASTRO, HOWEVER, SAID HE WOULD NOT SIGN AN AGREEMENT PRECLUDING CUBAN EXPORT OF CITRUS TO U.S. CITRUS ASPECT OF VISIT WILL BE REPORTED SEPTTEL). CASTRO SAID CUBA'S PRINCIPAL INTEREST IN US TRADE IS EXPORT OF SUGAR. HE SAID THIS IS ONLY AGRICULTURAL AREA WHERE CUBA'S PLANS CLASH WITH FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS. HE SAID THAT CUBA HAS NO INTENTION OF EXPORTING QUANTITY OF SUGAR THAT WOULD CUT INTO CURRENT US PRODUCTION, BUT CUBA DID THINK IT COULD RECLAIM ITS HISTORIC SHARE OF US IMPORT MARKET. WHEN ASKED WHETHER THIS WOULD PREJUDICE INTERESTS OF "JAMAICA, PUERTO RICO, AND TRINIDAD", CASTRO REPLIED, "I HAVE NO FEELINGS FOR THEM".

4. CASTRO ALSO ASSURED FLORIDIANS THAT CUBA IN POST-EMBARGO PERIOD WOULD BE BUYING FLORIDA VEGETABLES AND AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY AND TECHNOLOGY PRODUCED IN FLORIDA. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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5. WITH REGARD TO OVERALL ATTITUDE, KELLY FOUND CASTRO SERIOUS AND REASONABLY FLEXIBLE. HE SAID CASTRO BEHAVED WITH CONSIDERABLE RESTRAINT AND FAILED TO REACT WITH HOSTILITY TO SEVERAL PROVOCATIVE QUESTIONS. HE DID NOT CRITICIZE PRESIDENT OR ANY OTHER US FIGURES. WHEN KELLY POINTED OUT THAT IT IS PROPITIOUS TIME FOR GESTURE TO US, CASTRO APPEARED TO PONDER MATTER BUT DID NOT RAISE ANY CONCRETE POSSIBILITIES. KELLY, HOWEVER, WAS CONVINCED, ON BASIS OF CASTRO'S REMARKS TO TOTO, THAT NO GOOD CAN COME TO US FROM ASSOCIATION WITH CASTRO. HE WAS ALSO DISTURBED BY VARIOUS EVIDENCES OF REGIMENTATION AND MILITARIZATION WHICH HE SAY WHILE HERE

6. CASTRO QUIZZED KELLY IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL ABOUT PANMAA CANAL TREATY RATIFICATION POSSIBILITIES. CASTRO'S INTEREST WAS SO INTENSE THAT KELLY CHARACTERIZED IT AS A VIRTUAL PREOCCUPATION. (COMMENT: CASTRO'S INTENSE INTEREST PRESUMABLY REFLECTS WIDESPREAD CUBAN BELIEF THAT US FORWARD MOVEMENT WITH REGARD TO CUBA MUST AWAIT PANAMA TREATY RATIFICATON. THIS NOW ONLY TENDS TO DISCOURAGE CUBAN CONCESSIONS NOW, BUT ALSO, WE SUSPECT, LEADS TO MISCONCEPTION THAT ONCE PANAMA TREATIES ARE APPROVED, US MAY NOT

INSIST ON CURRENT POLITICAL CONDITIONS FOR NORMALIZATION.)

7. COMMENT: CONGRESSMAN KELLY RECEIVED EXTRAORDINARILY HIGH-LEVEL AND CORDIAL RECEPTION HERE. CUBANS APPARENTLY RECOGNIZED THAT THERE IS NEED TO OVERCOME OPPOSITON OF FLORIDA AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS, AND CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL SENTIMENT IN GENERAL, IF THEY ARE TO ACHIEVE THEIR OBJECTIVE OF GAINING ENTRY INTO US MARKET. CUBAN OFFICIALS AT AIRPORT FOR KELLY DEPARTURE APPEARED TO BELIEVE THAT THEY INFLUENCED KELLY GROUP POSITIVELY AND THAT THEIR ASSURANCES ON CITRUS NON-COMPETITIVENESS WOULD CARRY WEIGHT. OUR OWN CONVERSATIONS WITH KELLY AND HIS GROUP INDICATE, HOWEVER, THAT, WHILE CUBAN HOSPITALITY WAS MUCH APPRECIATED, BASIC DISTRUST OF CUBAN INTENTIONS IN BOTH ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SPHERES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CODELS
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977HAVANA00726
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770448-0623
Format: TEL
From: HAVANA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197712106/aaaadlue.tel
Line Count: 138
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION H
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12-Apr-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 114544
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CODEL KELLY WRAP-UP
TAGS: ETRD, EAGR, OREP, CU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a9facefb-c188-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009